First regulated weather briefings to emergency response helicopter operators

17 March 2016 - Offshore, police and emergency response helicopter pilots will receive fast and flexible access to weather-based information, helping to improve safety

The Met Office is today announcing the provision of the first regulated weather briefing service to emergency response helicopter operators, including UK Search and Rescue (SAR), Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) and England and Wales National Police Air Service (NPAS).

HeliBrief® provides offshore, police and emergency response helicopter pilots with flexible access to weather-based information. Now available across both tablet and mobile devices, helicopter operators are provided with essential weather information via tailored maps and charts, tracking route winds, triggered lightning, visibility and significant wave height information to inform the planning of safe routes and help contribute to improving the safety of the UK's helicopter operations

Ian Cameron, Executive Head of Aviation Business at the Met Office said: "By extending our remit and services, we are increasing the safety of emergency response helicopters, which is vital to ensuring the UK's air transport is planned, informed and safe."

Andy Wells, Manager Infrastructure, Airspace, ATM and Aerodromes, Civil Aviation Authority said: "The provision of a pre-flight Met briefing service dedicated to emergency response helicopters that often operate in challenging and difficult weathers conditions is welcomed."

The new HeliBrief® service marks an extension of the Met Office's existing Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) mandate to provide a regulated weather briefing service for offshore helicopter operators through its HeliBrief® Offshore product, formerly known as OH Web.

The product is now fully operational for offshore and emergency response helicopter operators across the UK. For more information, contact the Met Office Aviation team.

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